

What is claimed is:

1. An airbag apparatus for protecting an occupant in a vehicle, comprising:

5 an airbag having an occupant-side surface facing the occupant and a vehicle-body-side surface opposite to the occupant-side surface when the airbag is inflated, and at least an upper chamber and a lower chamber separated from each other,

a gas generator disposed in the airbag for generating gas to inflate the airbag,

10 a communicating portion between the upper and lower chambers, and

a check valve disposed in the communicating portion for preventing the gas from flowing from the lower chamber to the upper chamber.

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2. An airbag apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said occupant-side surface and said vehicle-body-side surface are joined at peripheries thereof to form a joint line, and said upper and lower chambers are defined by a partitioning joint line  
20 extending linearly, said partitioning joint line having one end away from the joint line to form the communicating portion and connecting a part of the check valve to the occupant-side surface and the vehicle-body-side surface.

25 3. An airbag apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said gas generator is located in the communicating portion so that an upper end of the gas generator extends slightly outwardly from the communicating portion.

4. An airbag apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said communicating portion forms a gas distributor retaining the gas generator therein and has a first outlet port for guiding the gas from the gas generator to the lower chamber and a second outlet port for guiding the gas from the gas generator to the upper chamber, said second outlet having an opening smaller than that of the first outlet port;

5. An airbag apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said gas distributor is formed of a sheet wrapping around the gas generator, and said first outlet port extends toward the lower chamber lower than the gas generator to form the check valve.

6. An airbag apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said gas distributor is formed of the sheet rolled in a cylindrical shape with edges thereof overlapped, and said gas generator is fixed with a mounting member passing through the edges.

7. An airbag apparatus according to claim 4, further comprising a bent unit formed in the upper chamber for allowing the gas to flow from the upper chamber to an outside of the airbag.

8. An airbag device for protecting an occupant in a vehicle, comprising:

an airbag having at least upper and lower chambers, at least one separating means for separating the upper and lower chambers, and a through hole with a periphery sealed by sealing means connected to the separating means,

a gas generator disposed in the airbag for generating gas to inflate the airbag,

a gas distributor disposed in the airbag and containing the gas generator therein, said gas distributor having a first outlet port for guiding the gas to the lower chamber and a second outlet port for guiding the gas to the upper chamber, and

5 a clamp member disposed around the gas distributor outside the airbag and passing through the through hole for pressing the airbag against the gas distributor.

9. An airbag device according to claim 8, further comprising a  
10 middle chamber disposed in the airbag between the upper chamber and the lower chamber.

10. An airbag device according to Claim 9, wherein said gas distributor further includes a third outlet port for guiding the  
15 gas to the middle chamber.

11. An airbag device according to claim 10, wherein said airbag has a plurality of through holes with peripheries thereof sealed by sealing means connected to separating means, said middle  
20 chamber being disposed between the separating means, said gas distributor having a third outlet port between the separating means.

12. An airbag device according to claim 9, further comprising a  
25 communicating portion disposed in the airbag for communicating the upper chamber and the middle chamber and for guiding the gas to the middle chamber from the gas generator via the upper chamber.

13. An airbag device according to claim 11, wherein said separating means are connected to the sealing means of one of the through holes.